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KSOU gets exclusive rights over distance education

State Cabinet takes significant decision to boost Mysuru-based Open University's prospects

University of Mysore to stop distance learning courses from the next academic year

Bengaluru/Mysuru, June 12 (KMS,RK&DM)- In a major policy decision, the Karnataka Cabinet yesterday resolved to have Mysuru-based Karnataka State Open University (KSOU) as the only and exclusive distance education provider among State-run Universities.

The KSOU has always claimed the exclusive rights for offering courses under Open and Distance Learning (ODL) mode and as the State's only Open University. It had even approached the University Grants Commission (UGC) seeking the reining in of conventional Universities offering Correspondence Courses additionally, beyond their territorial jurisdiction.

KSOU had also raised the issue with the Department of Higher Education and sought exclusive rights for offering ODL programmes, considering the purpose of its establishment. The KSOU had accused the other Universities of breaching their territorial jurisdictions for offering ODL courses beyond their territory with mutual NoCs availed for running the Correspondence Courses.

Other Universities offering distance education is causing huge financial loss to the KSOU that has been set up exclusively for the purpose. Now with the Cabinet taking a decision in this regard, KSOU becomes the only Distance Education University. The Government will ask all other State-run Universities to stop distance education courses offered by them, announced Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister J.C. Madhuswamy after the Cabinet meeting yesterday.

Affiliation in limbo

In the past, KSOU's affiliation was in limbo during 2015 to 2018. The UGC had de-recognised several courses of the Open University in 2012-2013 and the KSOU itself was de-recognised in 2015 after it was found violating several norms of UGC and Distance Education Council.

The Open University had violated the norms related to territorial jurisdiction by establishing study centres all over India and also offered courses violating all the regulations. UGC had issued a show cause notice but the then University authorities did not mend their errant ways. The UGC was finally compelled to de-recognise KSOU in 2015. After a long drawn and relentless court battle and many interventions by the KSOU and State Government, UGC relented and re-recognised the Open University in 2018.

Lakhs of students were put into severe hardships due to de-recognition. Later, the KSOU filed Police complaints against its two previous Vice-Chancellors, Finance Officer, Registrar and Registrar (Evaluation) in connection with various irregularities that led to the UGC derecognising the University. Probe is underway.

Elated with decision: KSOU VC

Speaking to *Star of Mysore* this morning, **KSOU VC Prof. S. Vidyashankar** said that he welcomed the Cabinet decision that was taken in the interests of KSOU.

He said that the KSOU has the entire infrastructure, staff, teaching and non-teaching staff, syllabus and examination conducting facilities for distance education. In this scenario, if the regular Universities are accorded permission to offer distance education courses, it will not only be a financial loss to KSOU but also lead to unhealthy competition.

(See KSOU on page 6)

Mysuru COVID-19 update

Mysuru, June 12- Nine COVID-19 positive cases in Mysuru on June 12. Of them 7 are Maharashtra returnees and were in institutional quarantine. One primary contact of a returnee from Tamil Nadu and was in the existing containment zone. One pregnant woman from K R Nagar with a travel history of K R Pet. Active cases as on date is 19.

Containment zones have been declared around the affected households in K R Nagar. Over 140 houses are in containment zone.

Over 13 stray dogs poisoned in T.K. Layout

Five carcasses found; one critical; many missing

Two stray dogs under treatment at People For Animals in city.

Mysuru, June 12 (BCT)- Has love for animals gone to the dogs in city? In a case of utmost cruelty and despicable criminality, more than 13 stray dogs have been poisoned and at least five dogs have been found dead in T.K. Layout, Kuvempunagar and surrounding areas.

Some of the poisoned dogs have been spotted walking in a wobbly state. People For Animals (PFA) said it will lodge a Police complaint in Saraswathipuram Police Station.

There are over 13 to 15 stray dogs in T.K. Layout, in and around Kavitha Bakery and a few residents were regularly feeding the strays. Lakshmi Gururaj, a resident, told PFA volunteers that she has been feeding the strays since a long time and especially during lockdown when all the hotels and eateries were closed. But since Wednesday, not a single stray was found in the locality.

(See STRAY DOGS on page 6)

'Protect environment from degradation'

Seen are Dr. Ashok Rao, Director, NIE Group of Institutions, Mysuru, Dr. Bansilal, Principal, Dr. N.V. Archana, Chairperson of Green Club and Head, Department of EEE and other members of Green Club.

Mysuru, June 12- The 'Green Club' of NIE Institute of Technology (NIE-IT), Koorgalli, celebrated World Environment Day on June 5 at the Institute premises. The programme was inaugurated by chief guest Dr. Bansilal, Principal, NIE-IT, Mysuru. Guests of honour were Dr. Ashok Rao, Director, NIE Group of Institutions, Mysuru and Dr. N.V. Archana, Chairperson of Green Club and Head, Department of EEE.

The main aim of this programme was to create awareness about how to protect the environment from degradation. The programme started with a talk by Dr. Archana on the effects of global warming, importance of waste management and the importance of trees in our lives.

This was followed by a speech by the chief guest, Dr. Bansilal who highlighted the need for sustainable development drawing inspiration from ancient Indian civilisation. He pointed out the importance of yogic and spiritual practices to build harmonious relationship between man and the nature which helps tackle the current situation due to COVID pandemic. The event concluded after planting saplings.

GSSS SCHOOL: B.K. Nataraj, Member of the Board and Co-ordinator, GSSS, inaugurated the World Environment Day celebrations at GSSS School on June 5 by watering a plant. A.V. Sudha, Administrative Officer, Siddarthanagar Campus, S.R. Hemalatha, Principal of the School, Sumana Priyavratha, Head Mistress, Teaching and No-Teaching Staff of the School were present.

VIDYAVARDHAKA COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING (VVCE): The following events were organised as part of World Environment Day celebrations by NSS and Red Cross Youth Wing of VVCE -- Plantation drive, essay writing competition and webinar on environment and sustainability. The event started by planting saplings in the college campus. Gundappa Gowda, President, Vidyavardhaka Sangha (VVS), P. Vishwanath, Secretary, VVS, Sreeshaila Ramannavar, Treasurer, VVS, Dr. B. Sadashivegowda, Principal, VVCE, Dr. K. Gopala Reddy, Coordinator, NSS and Red Cross Youth Wing and all faculty members of NSS and Red Cross Youth Wing were present. The prize winners of the essay writing competition held on the topic 'Biodiversity' are R. Rachana (first prize), V. Archana (second prize) and S. Aishwarya (third prize).

Dr. Laksham Reddy, Founder, Nemmadi Foundation and Environmentalist, was the resource person of the webinar. He gave a talk on the topic 'Environment and Sustainable Development.'

Koti Vruksha Pratishtana to distribute free saplings

Mysuru, June 12 (RKB&KS)- In a bid to increase the green cover in city by planting one crore saplings and nurturing them, Koti Vruksha Pratishtana will be distributing free saplings to nature lovers, farmers and the public, said Pratishtana President Srikanth Bhat.

Addressing a press meet at Patrakarthara Bhavan here yesterday, Srikanth said that the Pratishtana has so far planted 50,000 saplings. There are 20,000 saplings of Peepal, Neem, Mango, Jackfruit, Mahagony, Honge and other varieties with the Pratishtana, he said and urged the public to get the saplings free and plant them besides nurturing the saplings.

He also urged those who obtain saplings to send the photos of the saplings planted by them every three months on WhatsApp No: 94805-05931 and also send a message to the same number if they need saplings. Pratishtana's Parisara Chandru was present at the press meet.

GEET: Environment Day-2020 was celebrated by the members of Global Environmental Engineers Trust (GEET) on June 7 at Vijayanagar in Mysuru, in the presence of Ramesh (popular as 'Marada' Ramesh), Mary Ramesh and Binitha, who are known for planting more than 700 trees at Naidunagar. Members of Indian Wildlife Explorers, Manohar and Kavya, residents Raghu and others were also part of the team that celebrated the day by planting diverse species of fruiting, flowering and ornamental trees like Cluster Fig (Ficus racemosa), Malabar Plum (Syzygium cumini), Indian Almond (Terminalia catappa), Tree Jasmine (Millingtonia hortensis), Singapore Cherry (Muntingia) etc. Nature's fury, biodiversity and the immediate need for sustainable development were discussed during the event.

Members of GEET Dr. Nagendra Prasad, J.K. Roopa Priya, Ramya Raj, Thejaswi, Gaurav, Dr. Shreesha, Shruthi and Jitin Saldanha aspire to protect the environment and save Mother Earth through various activities.

YUVARAJA'S COLLEGE: World Environment Day was celebrated at Yuvaraja's College in a meaningful manner. Newly appointed Principal Dr. B. N. Yashodha addressed teaching and supporting staff of the college. She spoke about the origin of the World Environment Day tracing it to the Stockholm Convention held during the month of June 1972. Recalling former President Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam taking oath in the name of Environment, she also mentioned Mahatma Gandhi's environmental concern.

Dr. M. Rudraiah, retired Principal of Yuvaraja's College, Dr. D.K. Srinivas, retd. Administrative Officer, University of Mysore and Head of Electronics Department of Yuvaraja's College, Dr H.C. Devaraje Gowda, Administrative Officer, Yuvaraja's College, Dr. H.B. Mahesha, Controller of Examinations, Yuvaraja's College and staff participated in the programme.

Principal and others planted saplings of avenue trees such as Pink Tabeubia and Tree Jasmine and joined hands in enriching 'Biodiversity', the theme of current year's World Environment Day.

Dr. N.S. Devaki, Convener of Green Audit Committee of the College, co-ordinated the programme.

Calling fruit and vegetable growers to apply for compensation

Mysuru, June 12- The Horticulture Department has asked fruit and vegetable growers, who suffered extensive losses due to COVID-19 lockdown, to apply for getting relief under Integrated Horticulture Development Scheme. As per the Scheme, farmers will get a maximum relief of Rs.15,000 and a minimum of Rs.2,000 per hectare. Those farmers, who have cultivated crops in less than a hectare, will get compensation in accordance with the area of cultivation.

The certified/ verified list of fruit and vegetable growers under 2019-20 crop survey has been put up at the Horticulture Office and Taluk Office at taluk level, Gram Panchayat (GP) and Farmers Contact Centre. Water melon and musk melon fruit growers, who have missed out during crop survey, can collect the prescribed application form from the Horticulture Department Office in their respective taluk and submit the same along with the required documents before June 20.

However, the compensation does not apply for growers who took up cultivation after the fourth week of March. Only farmers, who have been covered under 2019-20 Horticultural crop survey as on the second week of March, 2020 alone are eligible to apply.

For details, contact the Office of the Senior Assistant Director of Horticulture at Mysuru (ZP) on Ph: 0821-2430450, H.D. Kote - 08228-255262, Hunsur - 08222-252447, K.R. Nagar - 08223- 262792, Nanjangud - 08221-226201, Periyapatna - 08223-273535 and T. Narasipur-08227-260086.

VOICE OF THE READER

Aadhaar applicants and Cyber Centres

Sir,

The Aadhaar Seva Kendras (ASKs) in Vijayanagar and Saraswathipuram have recently reopened after the lockdown was relaxed in Mysuru. The ASK had announced that only applicants with online appointments will be accepted. So there is a rush to get appointments from the Cyber Centres.

It has been observed that some Cyber Centres are allegedly exploiting the unsuspecting public while booking appointments.

Firstly, they are charging amounts varying from Rs. 50 to Rs. 200 for just booking an appointment, whereas UIDAI has not laid down any charges for booking an appointment. At the most they may charge Rs. 10 or Rs. 20 for their expertise to book the appointment and print out the appointment slip.

Secondly, the Cyber Centres are allegedly booking fake appointments for date and time slots which are already booked. This is done by manipulating the appointment slip. When the applicant goes to the ASK he finds that his appointment is not valid and is asked to get a fresh valid appointment.

It is also seen that some tempo drivers are bringing people in groups for update of Aadhaar card and charging them heavily for this service. The general public are requested to be cautious while going to such Cyber Centres for appointments.

— Col. N.G. Krishna Prasad (Retd.), Centre Manager, ASK
Vijayanagar
11.6.2020

Animal Adoption continues at City Zoo

Mysuru, June 12- The following persons have adopted the animals of Mysuru Zoo under 'Adoption of Animals' scheme by paying the adoption fee:

The Mysore Co-operative Bank Ltd. (Staff Contribution), Mysuru - Indian Grey Wolf, Green Anaconda, Emu, Himalayan Goral and Smooth Coated Otter - Rs.50,000.

Santram B. Nimbalkar, Bidadi - Indian Cobra - Rs. 2,000; AMIGOS (Kruthika), Mysuru - Star Tortoise - Rs. 2,000; N. Laksmish Gowda, Bengaluru - Common Ostrich - Rs. 10,000; Narasipura Doddamane Sujana Charitable Trust, Bengaluru - Himalayan Baboon - Rs. 10,000; Swathi Kashyap, Mysuru - Love Bird - Rs. 1,000; Dr. Sunil Mallesh, Bengaluru - Star Tortoise - Rs. 2,000; M. Sowjanya, Mysuru - Indian Grey Wolf - Rs. 20,000.

Suttur Seer donates Rs.5 lakh

Meanwhile, Suttur Seer Sri Shivarathri Deshikendra Swamiji has donated Rs. 5 lakh to Mysuru Zoo towards maintenance of birds and animals, according to a press release from the Zoo.

Obituary

B.K. Shantha

Mysuru, June 12- B.K. Shantha (73), wife of B.R.K. Kumar and a resident of Gokulam 3rd Stage, passed away yesterday in city. She leaves behind her husband, two sons and a host of relatives and friends.

Last rites were performed at Chirashanthidhama in Gokulam this morning, according to family sources.

M.N. Vasanthkumar

M.N. Vasanthkumar (59), a lecturer at Vidyavardhaka College on Seshadri Iyer Road and a resident of Kuvempunagar, passed away yesterday, following a heart attack.

He leaves behind his wife, one son, one daughter and a host of relatives and friends.

Last rites were performed at his native place Muthur in Periyapatna taluk this noon, according to family sources.

Lakshmamma

Lakshmamma (84), wife of late Ragupathy and a retired Nursing Superintendent at K.R. Hospital and JSS Hospital in city, passed away at her native place Mettupalyam in Tamil Nadu on June 11.

She leaves behind a host of relatives and friends.

Last rites were held at Mettupalyam yesterday evening.

Kodava Koota of North America to award scholarship to meritorious Kodava students studying in India

Mysuru, June 12- The Kodava Koota of North America has instituted a scholarship for the year 2020 to recognise and reward meritorious Kodava students studying in India.

Kodava Koota is a non-profit organisation founded in 2017 by like-minded Kodavas living in North America under the leadership of Gina Konganda, an entrepreneur based out of Dallas, Texas. She constituted a Board of 8 members (Appachu Ballachanda, Phoenix, AZ – Vice-President, Appanna Chottera, New Jersey – Secretary, Avinash Chottangada, Atlanta, GA – Treasurer, Nithan Monnanda, Philadelphia, PA – Kodagu Initiatives, Nalini Kuliyakanda, Goldsboro, NC – Culture and Traditions, Priya Pattada, San Francisco, CA – Membership and Subbaiah Cherumandanda, Los Angeles, CA – Career and Entrepreneurship), who are undertaking several initiatives both in North America and Kodagu.

In the year 2020, Kodava Koota is institutionalising multiple scholarships amounting to $10,000 (about Rs.7.5 lakh) for Kodava students in India. Kodava Koota has allocated $3,000 (about Rs. 2.2 lakh) from its membership fund and one of its members Jyothi and Pavan Pattada have donated $7,000 (about Rs. 5.3 lakh) for this initiative.

The objective of this initiative is to encourage Kodava students and reward them with scholarships as a token of appreciation towards their accomplishments and encourage other students to follow suit.

CATEGORIES: Medicine Studies (2 students pursuing under-graduate or post-graduate); Ph.D (1 pursuing Ph.D in the area of Science, Engineering or Technology); Engineering (2 under-graduate or post-graduates); Dental Sciences (1 under-graduate or post-graduate); Agricultural Science (1 under-graduate or post-graduate) and 2 students pursuing Master's in Science and Mathematics.

ELIGIBILITY: Kodava students studying anywhere in India are eligible to apply for these scholarships. Awards will be adjudicated by Kodava Koota Board or a Committee constituted by it. The scholarships will be administered through its partners Coorg Education Fund (coorgeducationfund.com).

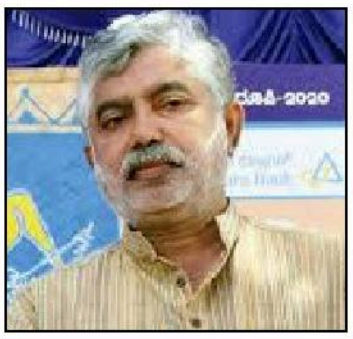
LAST DATE TO APPLY: Applications should reach Kodava Koota before July 31, 2020. Signature and seal of the educational institution is mandatory on the supporting documents like marks cards and letter of recommendation.

Students who are going to start 1st year of the course in 2020 are eligible to apply but will have to attach documents that confirm admission in addition to Grade 12 (or 2nd PUC marks sheet); First year students of courses like MBBS, BDS, BE where CET/NEET are applicable, applicants should upload a copy of the CET/NEET allotment order.

Fill the application forms and upload the supporting documents via: https://forms.gle/jcxPQDJMBZiNhJrQA

For more details, reach out to: kodavakoota.na@gmail.com or coorgedufund@gmail.com, according to a press release from the Kodava Koota.

Rangayana to conduct two new theatre education courses



Addanda C. Cariappa

Mysuru, June 12- In an attempt to keep its vibrant theatre tradition alive following an extended lockdown period and Coronavirus pandemic, city's theatre repertory Rangayana is launching two new projects called 'Short-term theatre education' and 'Theatre education for children.'

'Short-term theatre education' is a three-month course and has been designed for amateur theatre artistes. This course will be conducted twice a year, first one in the months of August, September and October and then in November, December and January. Youngsters who have passed SSLC and aged 18 to 30 years are eligible to take up this course. Each batch will have maximum 25 participants in which theatre skills will be taught for the first two months and then they would learn and stage a play in the third month. Each candidate will get certificate of participation.

'Theatre education for children' is for seventh to ninth standard students. This six-month course will be held on the weekends (every Saturdays from 2 pm to 5 pm and Sundays from 10 am to 5 pm). Participants will get trained and finally will be staging a play at the end. They will also be visiting other three theatre repertories in the State at Dharwad, Shivamogga and Kalaburagi. Each batch will have a maximum 30 students and given certificate of participation after successful completion of the course.

Speaking to *Star of Mysore*,' Rangayana Director Addanda C. Cariappa said, "We want to introduce theatre to our new generation. Our senior artistes have more than 30 years of rich experience in theatre and we would like to pass it on to these youngsters."

Staff Nurses seek fair wages

Mysuru, June 12 (MK&SD)- These are the frontline workers, popularly known as 'Corona Warriors'. They are working 12 hours a day to protect the society from the Coronavirus pandemic. But all this for a meagre stipend of just Rs. 8,000 to Rs. 10,000 per month!

This is the sad story of over 140 Staff Nurses, who are working day and night in Mysuru District Government Hospitals including K.R. Hospital, Cheluvamba Hospital and PKTB Hospital.

All these Staff Nurses, who are working for Mysore Medical College and Research Institute (MMC&RI) get a meagre amount per month as stipend. They are still eagerly waiting for increase in stipend amount, while getting appointed as a permanent employee is a remote possibility.

The Nurses have been recruited following completion of General of Nursing & Midwifery (GNM) Diploma course and they get stipends for their services. The State Govt. recently hiked the salaries of doctors, PG students, super-speciality and fellowship students and senior residents, but these Staff Nurses were not considered for the same.

Speaking to *Star of Mysore*, a Staff Nurse who did not want to reveal her name said, "We work hard for 12 hours a day, all for a meagre amount. Once in every six months, we need to apply for renewal, but as renewal would take some time for approval, we have to stay at home without either work or stipend. We don't get any benefits as ESI or PF."

"Recently, we were told to work in Hospital Wards having COVID patients. We don't get any medical facilities but what if we get infected and who will take care of us or our family?" she asked.

"Till 2016, Staff Nurses used to get stipend of Rs. 13,500 but now they have decreased the stipend amount with which it is very hard to run a family. We urge the district administration to hike our stipend as soon as possible," she said.

"We work hard for 12 hours a day including at COVID Wards, all for a meagre amount of Rs. 8,000 to Rs. 10,000 per month! Once in every six months, we need to apply for renewal, but as renewal would take some time for approval, we have to stay at home without either work or stipend. We don't get any benefits like ESI or PF."

Woman, daughter go missing from city

Mysuru, June 12 (KS)- A 26-year-old woman and her five-year-old daughter have been missing from Manchegowdanakoppal in city.

The missing persons are Bindu, wife of H.K. Kiran Kumar and her daughter Lasya. According to the complaint, Bindu and Lasya left home on June 6 saying that they were going to a shop and have since gone missing.

Those having any information about the missing persons may contact Hebbal Police Station on Ph: 0821-2418318 or call Police Control Room on Ph: 0821-2418339.

Senior citizen's gold chain snatched in Bannimantap

Mysuru, June 12 (KS)- Bike-borne miscreants have snatched a gold chain of a senior citizen at Bannimantap yesterday night.

The elderly woman, who lost her gold chain, is 76-year-old Sharadamma, a resident of HUDCO Layout in Bannimantap. She was returning home after visiting her relative when two persons on a bike snatched her 15 grams gold chain and sped away. One of the miscreants was wearing a red coloured T-shirt, it is learnt.

N.R. Police are investigating.

MySugar Factory won't be privatised, says Minister

Mandya, June 12 (Nagaiah&DM)- Assuring that the near Century-old MySugar Factory at Mandya won't be privatised, Sugar and Labour Minister Shivaram Hebbar said that the Government will run the Factory keeping in mind the sentiments of the people of the region.

Speaking to press persons after inspecting the Factory on Wednesday, Hebbar said that MySugar, which is a pride of Mandya district, will be run by the Government or under a Public-Private Partnership. Pointing out that the Government has released Rs.22 crore to re-start the Factory, he said that measures will be taken to ensure that there will be no hurdles for crushing of sugarcane in the future.

Noting that Mandya is the home district of CM B.S. Yediyurappa, he said that MySugar Factory is everyone's pride and as such it is important for everyone of us to save the Factory. He further said that the DC has been asked to map the entire property of the Factory and to submit an estimate on the money needed for running the Factory without hurdles.

Mandya District Minister K.C. Narayanagowda said that the Government had to drop plans of MySugar privatisation when it met with severe opposition for letting out the Factory on a 40-year lease earlier.

Mandya MP Sumalatha Ambarish said that it was important to start sugarcane crushing in time as time factor is important for the growers. Mandya MLA M. Srinivas, DC Dr. M.V. Venkatesh and others were present.

Govt. to pay pending wages of Pandavapura Factory workers

Pandavapura, June 12- Minister Shivaram Hebbar later visited PSSK (Pandavapura Sahakara Sakkare Karkhane) at Pandavapura, which was recently taken on a 40-year lease by Bagalkot District-based Nirani Sugars, owned by Bilgi BJP MLA and former Minister Murugesh Nirani.

Speaking to press persons after an inspection of the Factory and holding talks with the officials, Hebbar, replying to a query, said that the Government will soon take steps for clearing wage dues of the Factory workers.

Assuring that the Factory workers will be retained and not retrenched after takeover by Nirani Sugars, the Minister said that measures will also be taken for clearing dues to farmers.

Asserting that the properties of the Factory will be secured, Hebbar said that it is up to the successful bidder (Nirani Sugars) to set up a manufacturing facility for production of by-products.

MLA and former Minister C.S. Puttaraju, former PSSK Chairman K.S. Nanjundegowda, DC Dr. M.V. Venkatesh and others were present.

Lockdown rules violation

34 persons arrested for partying late night near KRS backwaters

Mysuru, June 12 (KS)- The KRS Police on Wednesday night arrested 34 persons for violating lockdown rules and partying late night when the ban order is in force from 9 pm to 6 am. However, they were released on Station Bail.

On Wednesday night, the birthday of one Dasappa alias Dasa was being celebrated at the farm house of one Shekar by organising a party along with music & dance following which the local residents informed the

Offenders released on Station Bail

Police alleging public nuisance.

KRS SI N.B. Naveen Gowda and staff, who raided the farm house, arrested all 34 persons besides seizing the music system, loud speakers and other equipment. Cases were registered against the 34 persons under IPC Section 269, 271, 290, 92(A) and notices were issued to them under CrPc Column 41 clause A and the offenders were released on Station Bail.

Stray cattle obstructing traffic caught

Mysuru, June 12 (RK&KS)- The officials of Mysuru City Corporation (MCC) with the help of N.R. Traffic Police have caught stray cattle that were obstructing smooth flow of traffic and causing accidents in city.

Following complaints that the stray cattle were causing problems near St. Joseph's School in Bannimantap and near Subashnagar on Mysuru-Bengaluru Road, N.R. Traffic Inspector Diwakaragowda and staff conducted an inspection yesterday and found that cattle owners at N.R. Mohalla, Kesare and Rajendranagar had let their cattle roam freely on the roads leading to accidents also.

The Police summoned the MCC's Abhaya team along with their vehicle, caught the stray cattle and shifted them. Cattle owners, who learnt that their cattle have been caught, rushed to the MCC Zonal Office near FTS Circle, where they paid the fine and got their cattle released. The MCC officials warned the cattle owners of registering a case, if they left their cattle on the roads.

COVID-19: More cured patients a matter of comfort to Mysuru

Five persons test positive on June 11; 10 active cases; 96 discharged

Mysuru, June 12 (MTY&BCT)- With five persons testing positive for COVID-19 in Mysuru yesterday, the total cases have increased to 106. Out of them, 10 are active and the remaining patients have recovered and discharged from the designated COVID Hospital on KRS Road.

All the fresh cases that have been registered have a travel history of Maharashtra and were in the institutional quarantine where they tested positive. Patient (P) 6121 is 31-year-old, P-6122 is 29, P-6123 is 59, P-6124 is 24 and P-6125 is a 35-year-old man. Reports said that all the new positive cases had come from Solapur in Maharashtra. They hailed from villages in and around Nanjangud and had applied through the Government's Seva Sindhu portal to return to their native places and accordingly they returned to Mysuru on June 1. They returned as COVID cases were touching its peak in Maharashtra.

As per protocol, as soon as they arrived in Mysuru, they were put in institutional quarantine at a hostel in Naidunagar and their throat swab tests were sent to laboratory and five were tested positive. Of them four are from Neelakantanagar in Nanjangud and one person is from Hullahalli.

No need to panic

The Mysuru District Administration has dispelled fears among the residents as new cases are being reported after the Nanjangud cluster case. Since all the positive persons were in institutional quarantine and they have no primary and secondary contacts, people need not panic, officials said. Also, it is a comforting factor for the District Administration that there are many active cases cured and discharged from the hospital.

The rooms of Naidunagar Hostel where the quarantined persons stayed since June 1 have been sanitised by a team led by Mysuru City Corporation Health Officer Dr. D.G. Nagaraj and other inmates of the hostel have been asked not to venture into those rooms.

Regarding the other district statistics, the Health department authorities have observed a total of 7,718 persons and tested samples of 12,581 persons. Out of them, 106 tested positive and 12,475 samples tested negative. 1,592 have been isolated in homes for 14 days and 85 persons have been isolated in facility quarantine for 7 days.

High discharge trend

In Mysuru, of the 106 COVID positive patients, 96 have been cured from the pandemic and have been discharged and at present, there are only 10 active cases in the designated hospital. Even in Karnataka State, for the first time since it started reporting COVID cases, the number of cured patients has outnumbered active cases. The State Government has called the number of cured patients outnumbering active cases as a milestone in the fight against COVID.

Situation under control in Mandya

The migrant population testing positive is normal in Mandya too. The district reported a spike in positive cases from Malavalli taluk after people and clerics returned from a religious congregation in Nizamuddin, New Delhi, were found infected. As it was brought under control, it was the turn of migrants from Maharashtra reporting a spurt in COVID cases, especially in K.R. Pet.

In all, Mandya reported 334 positive cases. While 255 patients have recovered and discharged, there are 79 active cases. However, since the last three days, no new positive cases have been reported. In all 12,126 persons have been examined in Mandya and 11,453 have tested negative. 341 test results are awaited. 4,964 are in home quarantine and 204 are in institutional quarantine.

Mandya is again seeing a surge of migrants from Maharashtra. Now as per the new rules, approval from Seva Sindhu portal is no more required and migrants can just register their name and travel. Around 200 migrants have arrived at K.R. Pet and Nagamangala taluks and all of them are quarantined at hostels after they were intercepted at check-posts.

Private Schools not to hike or reduce fee this year: CISPMAM

Mysuru, June 12 (MK&DM)- Amid the uncertainty over re-opening date of Schools, the CBSE, ICSE & State Board Private School Managements Association (CISPMAM), Mysuru, has said that it will not hike nor reduce School fees this academic year (2020-21).

Addressing a press meet at MCCI (Mysuru Chamber of Commerce and Industry) Office on D. Devaraja Urs Road here yesterday, CISPMAM, Mysuru, President Sudhakar Shetty said that the Association has members from over 240 Schools in Mysuru, Kodagu, Mandya and Chamarajanagar districts. The COVID-19 induced lockdown has disturbed the academic calendar and the closure of Schools and Colleges has left the students and their parents a worried lot, he said.

"Like all other sectors, the lockdown has badly affected the functioning of Schools. Some sections of the society have been demanding reduction in School fee this year as the income of parents have dwindled due to the lockdown. Considering the plight of parents, there will be no hike in fee this year," he said and added that the School Managements are further burdened by the additional costs that will be incurred for taking extra precautionary and safety measures to ensure the health and safety of students in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.

Pointing out that there are over 40 lakh students studying in Government Schools and 36 lakh students in Private Schools in the State, he said that over 3 lakh staff were serving in Private Schools. The Government must take the Private School Managements into confidence before taking any policy decisions, he added.

Referring to the issue of online education, Sudhakar Shetty said that CISPMAM was opposed to online education in classes from LKG to Fifth standards. Arguing against holding online classes for children of such a tender age, he said that this will have an adverse impact on the mental and physical health of children and urged the Government to take action against Schools which are holding online classes.

CISPMAM office-bearers Radhakrishna, Ravindraswamy, Venkatesh, Swaroopini, Manjunath, Kumaraswamy and others were present at the press meet.

UoM ranked 27th among State Varsities in NIRF ranking

Mysuru, June 12 (RK&BCT)- The century-old University of Mysore (UoM) has been ranked 27th among all State-run Universities in the National Survey conducted by the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) of the Union Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). Last year, the University was placed in 57th position and this year, it has improved a few steps.

The NIRF, launched in September 2015, outlines a methodology to rank institutions across the country based on overall recommendations and broad understanding arrived at by a Core Committee set up by MHRD.

The UoM has been ranked 62.99 out of 100 in Teaching, Learning & Resources, 19.55 out of 100 in Research and Professional Practice, 92.51 out of 100 in Graduation Outcomes, 54.45 out of 100 in Outreach and Inclusivity and 31.30 out of 100 in peer perception.

Speaking to *Star of Mysore*, UoM Vice-Chancellor Prof. G. Hemantha Kumar said that he felt elated as the University has achieved 27th place and has improved its positioning from 57th place. "This is a prestigious ranking and we will strive to further improve our place in the ranking next year. We will increase the performance and also heighten our research and education capabilities. This year, we are also competing in National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) ranking and this NIRF ranking will help our prospects," he added.

Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham fourth best Varsity

Mysuru, June 12 (BCT)- Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham has emerged as the 4th best University in the country in the NIRF Ranking 2020. The University was also ranked 7th among Medical Colleges in India.

Amrita School of Arts & Sciences in Bogadi II Stage, Mysuru, is one of the constituent schools of Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham and has been imparting quality education over the last 13 years.

Amrita School of Medicine is ranked 7th best Medical College in the country.

"It is ample testimony to the vision of the world-renowned humanitarian leader and Chancellor, Sri Mata Amritanandamayi Devi in setting the dual goals of education for life and compassion-driven research. The recognition would not have been possible for the tiring efforts put in by the students and staff, and I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of India in bestowing this honour," said Dr. P. Venkat Rangan, Vice-Chancellor, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham.

As per THE (Times Higher Education) World University Rankings 2020, Amrita is ranked as No.1 Private Institution in India securing its place among the Top 300 in the world for Medicine and Top 500 in Engineering.

The faculty members of Amrita have published more than 12,000 research articles in peer-reviewed journals and conferences attracting 65,000 citations, filed more than 120 patents and written more than 300 scholarly books, in the past 15 years, according to a press release from Dr. Rekha Bhat, Principal, Amrita School of Arts & Sciences, Mysuru.

Chamundi Hill and Nanjangud temples to remain closed on weekends and holidays

Mysuru, June 12- Based on the Centre's fresh guidelines on the extra-precautionary measures to be taken to stop the spread of the deadly Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Deputy Commissioner Abhiram G. Sankar has ordered closure of Chamundeshwari temple atop Chamundi Hill and Srikanteshwaraswamy temple at Nanjangud on weekends (Saturdays and Sundays) and all public holidays.

The Government had allowed re-opening of all places of worship, religious spots and spiritual centres from June 8 following relaxation in lockdown curbs and accordingly Chamundeshwari temple and Nanjangud temple opened for devotees.

Now, subsequent to the Centre's fresh guidelines on crowd control, the DC has ordered closure of the two temples on Saturdays, Sundays and public holidays. The vehicles of devotees are allowed to travel only on the road leading from Tavarekatte side to Chamundi Hill, while all other entry routes to the hill temple have been closed.

However, there is no change in the temple timings on weekdays. Chamundeshwari temple will be open for devotees from 7.30 am to 1 pm and 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm while Nanjangud temple will be open from 7 am to 1 pm and 3.30 pm to 5.30 pm, from Monday through Friday. Devotees have to maintain physical distancing, undergo thermal screening and wear face masks during temple visit.

No 'Mudi Seva'

The DC has banned 'Mudi Seva' (tonsuring of head) at Nanjangud temple as a safety measure.

No Ayyappa darshan at Sabarimala from June 14

Thiruvananthapuram, June 12- Kerala Devaswom Minister K. Surendran on Thursday said that there will be no Lord Ayyappa Swamy darshan at the famed Sabarimala Hill shrine for devotees from June 14, in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic.

Speaking to press persons here yesterday, Surendran said that Travancore Devaswom Board, which runs the temple, met recently to decide whether to open the temple for devotees in the wake of the commencement of monthly rituals from June 14. The Board after prolonged deliberations on the pros and cons of opening the temple for devotees in the backdrop of Corona spread scare, decided against opening of the temple and accordingly, the temple will be shut for devotees from June 14, he said and added that the temple festival too has been cancelled considering the health and safety of the people.

Over 13 stray dogs poisoned

(Continued from page 1)

To the shock and disbelief of the residents and dog lovers, they found that the strays have been poisoned. "I have cooked food for the dogs but they have not arrived," said Lakshmi Gururaj. Area residents said that carcasses of five dogs have been found and two dogs that have managed to survive are being treated at PFA veterinary hospital.

Area residents said that all the strays in the locality were neutered and vaccinated. All were healthy and friendly and have never displayed ferocious behaviour nor chased the children and vehicles. While two dogs were found dead on the 2nd Cross, the carcass of two other dogs was found in other location.

As residents found a few more canines showing signs of weakness, they alerted the PFA.

Speaking to 'Star of Mysore' this morning, Managing Trustee of PFA, Mysuru, Savitha Nagabhushan said that the PFA received information about the poisoned and missing dogs at 3.50 pm yesterday.

"We immediately sent rescue team and veterinary doctors at around 4 pm who found three dogs struggling for life. They were picked up for medical attention but one dog passed away on the way to the hospital and the condition of the other two dogs is critical. The post-mortem has been conducted and the samples have been sent to a laboratory in Bengaluru for tests," she said.

PFA volunteers attending to a poisoned stray dog.

"We suspect that some miscreants poisoned the dogs. We are awaiting the lab reports," she added. Some of the dogs were even found walking in a wobbly way. "We have brought the issue to the notice of Mysuru City Corporation Commissioner Gurudatta Hegde and our volunteers have gone to Saraswathipuram Police Station to lodge a complaint," Savitha said.

KSOU gets exclusive rights

(Continued from page 1)

"There are dedicated Universities for Technical, Medical, Agriculture, Veterinary Science, Horticulture, Kannada, Sanskrit, Music and Folklore education. Likewise, it is pertinent to have an exclusive University for Distance Education and KSOU was set up solely for this purpose," Vidyashankar added.

UoM VC reacts: University of Mysore (UoM) Vice-Chancellor Prof. G. Hemantha Kumar, who had set up the Directorate of Distance Education in the University for providing education through Correspondence and Distance Learning programmes, reacting to the Cabinet's decision, said that UoM is committed to the Government's decision.

"The Mysore University will complete the distance learning courses already started by it with the admission of students last year. As per the Government's decision, there will be no fresh admissions for distance education courses from the forthcoming academic year. We will take note of the Government Order once we receive it and act accordingly," he said.

Lockdown: KSRTC Mysuru Rural Division suffers Rs. 4.2 crore loss

Mysuru, June 12 (RK&DM)- Due to the COVID-19 induced nationwide lockdown, the KSRTC Mysuru Rural Division has suffered a loss of Rs. 4.2 crore in the three-month period running from March to June.

KSRTC Mysuru Rural Divisional Controller R. Ashok Kumar told 'Star of Mysore' that the Division used to earn Rs. 80 lakh to Rs.1 crore a month during normal times through operation of trips. Also about Rs.1.4 crore revenue used to be generated a month from rentals of shops and other commercial establishments functioning from bus stand complexes in the city and across the district. In total, the revenue earnings amounted to about Rs. 4.2 crore a month, he said and added that the KSRTC has lost this revenue due to suspension of bus services and shutdown of bus stands.

Continuing, he said that in the pre-lockdown period, the Division operated 670 buses daily

to various destinations within the State and neighbouring States. But now, only 250 buses are in operation and the passenger response too is not satisfactory. He further said that shops functioning from bus stand complexes have been asked to pay rent with effect from May 19, the date on which bus services resumed two months after suspension.

Ashok Kumar also said that the response to long distance destinations within the State is not on expected lines. The Division may earn more revenue if Government allows operation of Inter-State and Air-conditioned bus services, he added.

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